

It is clear we need women's voices now more than ever. I am very proud of the fact that 40 percent of the Democrats in Congress are women, but we need more.

I am proud to serve with the largest group of women in Congress in U.S. history and to call these incredible Congresswomen my friends, colleagues, and Speaker of the House. I look forward to working with them toward full gender equality.

We will not wait another 100 years.

HONORING JIMMIE LEE MASON, SR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONAWAY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a longtime good friend of mine named Jimmie Lee Mason from Lubbock, Texas.

Jimmie Lee was a CPA, a consummate professional, and someone who took his profession very seriously and helped create the firm Mason Warner, which is in existence today.

Jimmie Lee passed away on April 5, 2019. He was 89 years old and leaves a giant hole in the hearts of his family, as you might expect.

I first met Jimmie Lee when I joined the State Board of Accountancy in Texas. Jimmie Lee, for whatever reason, and I will now never know, chose to take me under his wing. He mentored me. He was a wise counselor.

As a result of his friendship and his help, I was able to chair the State Board of Accountancy, and I was able to chair the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy. I did that work much better and more professionally because of my friendship and his leadership and help throughout that process.

My story is only one of many, many like it. Jimmie served the Texas State Society of CPAs throughout his entire career. There are countless other CPAs who could have the exact same conversation with you that I am having this morning as a result of his friendship and his leadership.

Jimmie leaves behind a wife of 66 years, Wanda; son Jimmie Lee Mason, Jr.; daughter Kristi Killion and her husband, Jerry; son Greg and his wife, Areace; and his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Jimmie Lee, everywhere he touched got better, whether it was a not-for-profit organization in Lubbock that he served or his profession that he served diligently for all those years. Countless individuals whom he came in contact with are much better off, none more so than the fellow who stands in front of you here today.

My life is better as a result of my friendship with Jimmie Lee Mason, and I miss my friend.

COMMEMORATING 100 YEARS OF WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Madam Speaker, one century ago today, the United States House of Representatives passed a constitutional amendment granting women the right to vote. Just 1 year later, the 19th Amendment was ratified.

Even before women had the right to vote, women from Indiana were on their feet, rallying their voices to be heard. Hoosier suffragettes such as Amanda Way, Zerelda Wallace, May Wright Sewall, Helen Gougar, Dr. Amelia Keller, and Grace Julian Clarke led the push for suffrage in Indiana and inspired Hoosier women to stand up and speak out about their rights.

Each of these women and so many more across the country paved the way so that other women can now vote and hold local, State, and Federal Government positions.

It is an honor to be one of seven Congresswomen elected thus far to represent the Hoosier State in our Nation's Capital, but it began with Representative Virginia Ellis Jenckes, who began her service in 1933; then Cecil Murray Harden, who began her service in 1949; Katie Hall in 1982; Jill Long Thompson in 1989; Julia Carson in 2003; and my good friend JACKIE WALORSKI and I in 2013.

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Hoosier women have certainly left their marks in America's history book. But, as I stand here today, I am struck at how much work, yes, we still have to do.

Exercising our right to vote is the most powerful tool we have to share our voice. Today, I join many colleagues here in the House wearing a yellow rose commemorating the suffragettes fight for our rights to vote. So much has been accomplished by women and for women in the past 100 years. Today, I want to encourage all Americans to consider how much farther we can go in the next 100 years.

CHARACTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Madam Speaker, I rise today to reflect on moral character, which is essential to the promise of America in order for us to flourish.

I am reminded that we stand on the shoulders of so many who have gone before us and impacted our lives in many ways—members of our greatest generation—who bravely fought tyranny and oppression during World War II. They were driven by honor, duty, and country. They were selfless, not drawing attention to themselves or seeking to be a celebrity or a hero.

They are the models for character that we must always celebrate and remember. They would never admit it, but they are heroes, heroes for bravely and humbly doing their part to protect our freedom.

Madam Speaker, why is character so important? Why does it matter? It is because our character—who we are and the decisions that we make when we are tested—is foundational to the rule of law.

In this body, we talk a lot about the Constitution, our God-given rights, bills and laws, checks and balances, the rules and the procedures that govern debate, the branches that make up this government, and so on. All of these pieces of our government are significant, but they are lifeless and have no meaning without the spirit of good faith.

If we, representatives of the people, don't lead with moral character, America doesn't stand a chance against corruption and the breakdown of trust with the people we serve. It is on us, each one of us, doing our part for what is righteous, what is just, and for what will keep America free.

President Reagan once said:

Freedom isn't passed down to us in the bloodstream; it has to be fought for.

In other words, freedom involves choices, and that is precisely why character matters.

Every single day, every single moment, our character is tested. In politics, it is tested by the temptations of power, palace intrigue, ambition, and personalities.

I won't blame either side of the aisle, Madam Speaker, but these are the smoldering fires that burn around us that threaten our institutions and our laws.

Did you know that only 3 percent of Americans trust the government will do the right thing—3 percent. Forty-six percent of Americans say that they have very little confidence in Congress. That is a crisis of confidence, and it is a call for reformation of character, so that people will trust and can trust that their representatives will always act in good faith on their behalf.

Again, it starts with us being better examples, not for the glory or the recognition, but because it is the right thing to do. We must be countercultural to the divisiveness that has taken hold of modern politics today. That means stopping the blame game, honoring another's argument, even when we disagree, and acknowledging, and even celebrating, our differences without attacking the other side's character. That is the way that we will come together to find out how we can make tough decisions without kicking the can down the road.

I fear what may come if things do not change. As Abraham Lincoln famously said, "A House divided against itself cannot stand." The strength of our Nation, our Constitution, our laws, and our institutions have no greater guardians than us. It is this government of